

Docket Item #12  
BAR CASE #2005-0084

BAR Meeting  
May 4, 2005

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish

**APPLICANT:** Janice Cronin & Stephen Rhind-Tutt by Stephanie Dimond

**LOCATION:** 623 South Fairfax Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

**NOTE:** This docket item requires a roll call vote.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish portions of the rear of the freestanding residence 623 South Fairfax Street. The areas to be demolished and capsulated are:

- the southwest corner of the house on both the first and second levels;
- the west (rear) of the house on the second level; and,
- the north west corner of the house is proposed to be encapsulated on the first level to allow construction of a new porch.

Additionally, a number of single windows are proposed to be expanded to paired windows.

**II. HISTORY:**

623 South Fairfax Street is a freestanding two and a half story Greek Revival style frame residence which dates from the mid-19th century according to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street* (p.51). The enclosed porch at the south west corner is an early 20<sup>th</sup> century addition.

**III. ANALYSIS:**

In considering a Permit to Demolish, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §10-105(B):

- (1) Is the building or structure of such architectural or historical interest that its moving, removing, capsulating or razing would be to the detriment of the public interest?
- (2) Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into a historic house?
- (3) Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?
- (4) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway?
- (5) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (6) Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?

The area generally proposed for demolition and capsulation is at the rear or sides of the house and either is not or is only minimally visible from the public right-of-way. Because of this the public perception of the house from the street will not change. Additionally, the major area proposed for demolition at the southwest corner of the house dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is in extremely poor structural condition.

In the opinion of Staff, criteria #6 could conceivably apply to this house because studying the

house in its current form could provide information on historic architecture, design and construction methods. However, given the overall work program and the opportunity to rehabilitate this house, Staff is willing to recommend that the Permit to Demolish and Capsulate be granted.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

### Code Enforcement:

C-1 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.

### Historic Alexandria:

No comment.